

DRAFT MINUTES OF St John's Church Egham Annual Parochial Church Meeting 2023

24 April 2023, 8pm, St John's Church Egham (and via Microsoft Teams)

Annual Meeting of Parishioners

The Annual Meeting of Parishioners was held in the church on 24 April 2023 with Rev James Ellin as chair. The meeting opened at 8pm.

1. Opening prayer and welcome

Rev James Ellin, the curate, introduced himself and welcomed everyone to Saint John The Baptist Church, Egham, before handing over to Clem Jones, the Parochial Church Council (PCC) Secretary.

Clem introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the first part of the meeting, the Annual Meeting of Parishioners (APM). Clem noted that this is a joint meeting of the persons whose names are entered on the electoral roll of the parish, and persons resident in the parish whose names are entered on a register of local government electors by reason of such residence. Clem noted that this meeting has been convened by Rev Esther Prior, the minister, and the notice has been displayed near the principal door of the church and in a location readily visible to members of the congregation, namely the notice board at the back of the church building.

Clem noted that Rev Esther Prior, the incumbent, is unable to attend the meeting due to recovery from a minor medical procedure rendering her absent for a couple of weeks. Clem noted that in the minister's absence, a chairman may be elected by the APM, and proposed that Rev James Ellin, the curate, chair both the Annual Meeting of Parishioners and the Annual Parochial Church Meeting in her absence. No objections were raised.

Rev James Ellin thanked Keith as vice chair and Clem, and opened the meeting in prayer with St John's verse for 2023, Romans 12 verse 12.

James explained the etiquette for anyone wishing to contribute to the meeting and noted that the meetings are being recorded to assist us with compiling the minutes.

2. Election of (two) Churchwardens

James thanked Amin Deiry and Joyce Johnson for their diligence and hard work in their role as Churchwardens over the last year. St John's received two nominations, proposing Amin Deiry and Joyce Johnson for re-election as church wardens. Majority voted in favour, no abstentions.

James prayed for Amin and Joyce.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting was held in the church on 24 April 2023 with Rev James Ellin as chair, following the Annual Meeting of Parishioners.

James noted that there are members of the laity present who are not yet on the electoral roll but are serving in leading worship, and asked if there were any objections to them attending the meeting as observers. No objections were raised.

Clem noted that the minister is usually the Chair of the APCM and in their absence it passes usually to the vice-chair, however, the Church Representation Rules also allow a person to be chosen by the annual meeting if the vice chair does not wish to take the chair. Clem noted that Keith has indicated he is happy not to take the Chair in this instance, no objections were raised to Rev James Ellin continuing to chair the meeting.

3. Apologies for absence

Amin Deiry, Rev Esther Prior, Mandie Shirnia, Michael Senanayake, Philomena Evans and Sacha Sheppard gave their apologies.

4. Worship

We sang There is A Redeemer (CCLI #11483) and Great Is Thy Faithfulness (CCLI #18723).

5. Minutes of previous APCM and matters arising

Phil Holloway noted that on page 4 that the minutes stated that Sam Senanayake and Phil were unable to serve as assistant wardens, but in fact they would continue to serve as assistant wardens.

Clem asked if all were in favour of receiving the minutes of the 2022 APCM as an accurate record, subject to making the change above. All present voted in favour.

Clem noted that one parishioner raised that the treasurer's slides were not circulated afterwards. Sara Holloway will pick up whether this year's slides will be shared when she presents her report.

6. Vicar's Report

James prayed for Esther and her recovery.

James gave the report in Esther's absence. He passed on two messages from Esther. Firstly, a huge thank you to everyone who has sacrificially given of their time, talents and treasure, both those who have carried on serving and those who are completely new. Secondly, welcome to those who are new and were not part of the church family a year ago. Being able to say thank you and welcome are real markers of the health of the church, it is a joy to serve alongside you. James noted that saying welcome home and welcome into a new ministry is a joy.

James then gave thanks for Playbox, the church-owned nursery on site, and its 50th anniversary. He thanked them for their effort and invited all to come along to the anniversary celebration and asked those who can bake cakes to tell Carol Peters.

James also took the opportunity to thank people for attending the APCM and read Romans 12 verses 9 to 12, and thanked everyone for practising what is in these verses, including in safeguarding issues, difficult decisions and conflicts. James urged us to continue to act like this,

and encouraged us to read the ministry reports, which reflect the ways that we do this. He encouraged us to fix our eyes on Jesus in all our zeal.

7. Presentation of the Electoral Roll

Clem Jones thanked Veronica Cresswell and announced that we have 317 people on the Electoral Roll this year. A copy is available at the back of church.

8. Election of up to four lay representatives to serve on Runnymede Deanery Synod for a triennium, and up to seven lay representatives to serve on the PCC for one to three years

Election of up to four lay representatives to serve on Runnymede Deanery Synod for a triennium

Clem noted that up to four lay representatives can be elected to Deanery Synod at this APCM and announced that four nominations have been received, proposing to elect Lee Langford, Veronica Cresswell, Amin Deiry and Joyce Johnson as Lay Representatives for Runnymede Deanery Synod. Clem noted that as the number of candidates does not exceed the number of seats to be filled each candidate can be declared elected. James, as Chair, agreed that they can be duly elected.

Keith prayed for those serving on Deanery Synod, including their role as electors for the next General Synod, and thanked God for the nine other parishes.

Election of up to seven lay representatives to serve on the PCC for one to three years

Clem noted that up to seven lay representatives can be elected to PCC at this APCM and announced that seven nominations have been received, proposing to elect Fred Van Huis, Sam Senanayake, Elizabeth Tebboth and Alan Beer, and re-elect Conrad Benefield, Stacey Sobers and Sara Holloway as Lay Representatives for the PCC. Clem noted that as the number of candidates does not exceed the number of seats to be filled each candidate can be declared elected. James, as Chair, agreed that they can be duly elected. Clem noted that we will be taking lots to determine the length of terms of these representatives due to some members standing down this year.

Pauline Wickes asked if the individuals elected could identify themselves. James invited those present at the meeting to come to the front. Tim Senanayake prayed for the existing and newly elected PCC members and thanked God for them.

James thanked Michael Senanayake, who couldn't be present, for his service on PCC, having stepped down this year.

9. Presentation of DRAFT Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements

Sara Holloway presented the 2022 Draft Annual Report and Accounts.

We produced a net surplus of £127,000 with £108,000 of this paying off the Easter Centre debt; there was a surplus of £14,000 in the General Fund. Playbox made a small loss of £1,000 but do pay £16,000 for the use of the Easter Centre. Sara highlighted that in late summer we were predicting a loss, prayer and prudence was the focus for PCC and God is good in his provision.

These are great results in a year with financial uncertainty and inflation at 10% by the end of the year. Sara expressed her thanks to those who were tight in their spending.

Total income was £693,000, 69% came from the congregation – includes £94,000 of gift aid. Sara thanked Phil Johnson and Andrew Tebboth for claiming every penny of gift aid we can, and noted that Phil will be approaching all existing Gift Aid givers this year to update admin. 200 people gave to the general fund, 100 gave to Easter Centre. She recognised that not everyone can give and we acknowledged the contributions made by volunteers in the annual report, we could not afford to pay for all the services that are given, so thanks to them.

With expenditure, some is a set amount, like the Parish Share. Other costs relate to buildings and the administrative support needed to run our ministries. Sara set out a non-extensive list of what is included across four categories (excluding salaries):

- **Worship** helps us to Love God, we spent £7,000 for things like services, choir music, flowers, AV equipment and the Jubilee Party.
- We spent £5,000 on **Adult Mission**. This includes the Hope Cafe (75 people came to this recently), the Bereavement Course, and CAP.
- We spent £5,000 on **Youth and Students**.
- We spent £7,000 on **Children**. We have seen an increase from 50 to 75 attendees at Playtime, and this spend also includes Holiday Club.

Church running costs amounted to £18,000, Easter Centre running costs were £32,000, and office running costs £13,000.

The Easter Centre debt as of 20 April 2023 was £930,000. We paid off £50,000 of the debt at last year's Gift Day.

Sara set out that in the year ahead we are aiming to balance the books, replace the boiler, pay for the buildings, continue to keep ministries going (as they increase, so do costs), and continue to support the church family to Love God.

Sara noted that it is only possible for her to stand here with faithful support of the finance team, and thanked the following people:

- Neville Hosegood – reviewing insurance
- Phil Johnson and Andrew Tebboth – Partnerships
- Joyce Johnson – banking cash
- Alastair Marshall – bookkeeping and paying bills
- Geoff Wickes – knowledge of finances
- Chris Gray – Playbox and Hardship Fund

Sara thanked Alastair for all the work he has done as he leaves the finance team, and for his promise to support Geoff Wickes as he becomes Assistant Treasurer. Sara also thanked Chris Gray for his work on the annual accounts and financial year end and day-to-day decisions, whilst Sara was out of the country for work, and his support with the audit process.

James and Keith prayed for Sara and thanked God for her and the finance team.

Fiona Davies asked if the tithe for mission partners is separated before any other outgoings. Sara set out that our income and tithe are out of step at the moment and PCC will be discussing this at their next meeting. Out of our 10% tithe we pay a set amount to CAP and then the remaining money goes to our mission partners. Fiona noted that less than 10% goes to our mission partners if CAP is not a mission partner. James confirmed that Steve Cresswell, as chair of the PCC-commissioned CAP funding working group, will be looking at this and will attend the next Mission Partnership Team (MPT) meeting to discuss this. Jorg Haustein, outgoing MPT Chair, explained that this has been an ongoing issue, CAP requires a fixed amount of contribution and the MPT agreed that CAP would be a mission partner 4 or 5 years ago but did not want the amount we give to our other mission partners to be reduced. This has not yet been resolved but Kamani Hewagama, incoming MPT Chair, is taking up the conversation.

Margaret Llewellyn asked if we were cutting back on mission partnership spend when the world is struggling. She highlighted reports from Child Action Lanka who could only give the children one cup of milk per week, and noted that we eat a lot of sugary foods at this church and this could fund a lot of milk for Sri Lanka. She noted that we have been good at focusing on eco initiative but not following advice to cut down on sugar, where we'd have an opportunity to donate that money to mission partners who are struggling for basic foods. Sara did not have a figure for how much we spend on food and agreed to go away and think about this.

Chris Peters asked how it was possible for Playbox to make a loss of £1,000 but paid £16,000 towards the Easter Centre, and do we treat them other users in the same way. Keith set out that the £16,200 is a contribution to use the Easter Centre, using a grant from Surrey County Council, and not a payment towards the debt. We treat everyone equally in terms of contributions to using the Easter Centre, but Playbox is a major user as it is there 5 days a week.

James noted that Sara can be emailed at treasurer@stjohnsegham.com and can answer questions throughout the year via this method.

10. Appointment of Auditor

Sara proposed the re-appointment of Menzies LLP as external auditors. Majority voted in favour with one abstention.

11. Annual Deanery Synod Report

Clem noted that we received a 2022 report from the Deanery Synod.

Clem noted that, as Climate Champion for Runnymede Deanery, we may be required to improve our reporting to the national church through General Synod about our progress towards net zero, if we count as a 'larger church'. We will continue our Eco Church efforts and improve measuring our energy footprint and carbon footprint.

Clem thanked Keith for serving as Lay Chair of Deanery Synod, having stood down in the past year.

12. Churchwarden's Statement including:

Amin provided a video report in his absence, on behalf of himself and Joyce. He reflected on the past year and the honour and privilege it has been to serve and take care of church activities. He thanked the following people:

- The clergy team and Esther as vicar, guiding us through a year of devotion and love to the Lord and to every one of us.
- The assistant wardens.
- The sidespeople.
- All the members of PCC.
- Everyone who gives of their time and talents to the development of St John's and looking after each other.

Report on the Church Fabric and Furnishings.

Joyce noted that there have not been many changes to the fabric, so the focus for the Buildings Team has been to improve energy usage in the church buildings. She thanked Chris Peters and Dave Watts for their work on this, adding low energy lightbulbs, draft exclusion, education on closing doors and turning off lights, helping us on the first steps towards Net Zero. She also noted that the Easter Centre being six years old means there are things starting to come to the end of their life, including batteries in emergency lights. She also highlighted that we should be prepared for work needed on the roof in the next few years. There are working parties once a month, and Joyce thanked the team of people who are there faithfully to keep the church grounds looking brilliant.

James implored us to read the ministry reports, recognising the amount of activity that goes on behind the scenes.

13. Prayer in Small Groups

James led us in a prayer of confession and then invited the APCM to break into small groups to pray, thanking God and acknowledging him at work. James then prayed the Lord's Prayer.

James thanked those who made the meeting happen, Clem, Beth Tebboth, Johnny Sheppard and Grace Hopkins, Fred Van Huis and David Hassan, and the band. He prayed a prayer of blessing.

14. Closing worship

We sang Goodness of God (CCLI #7117726).

15. Closing prayer and blessing

The meeting closed following the worship at 9.50pm.